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Two Charged with Setting Morris Fire

Two men were charged today with setting a brush fire near the Morris Dam, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Christopher Paul Ortega (dob 1/13/98) of Glendora and Santino Francisco Gnaulati (dob 10/1/96) of Covina each face one felony count of arson of a structure or forest in case KA118800.

Ortega and Gnaulati pleaded not guilty to the charges and are scheduled to return on Aug. 29 in Department 4 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, West Covina Branch.

The two defendants allegedly started the fire near Highway 39 in the San Gabriel Mountains on Aug. 7, prosecutors said. The blaze burnt nearly a quarter of an acre.

If convicted as charged, Ortega and Gnaulati face a possible maximum sentence of six years in state prison.

The case remains under investigation by the U.S. Forest Service.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.